

March 2012  
E-newsletter

## NEW EASTER TRADITIONS

Many of us have cherished Easter traditions - worship, the place we gather for Easter dinner, the menu, the baskets, and the Easter egg hunt. I am certainly not suggesting that you replace all of those treasured traditions. This is a time to encourage you to consider a new addition, by sharing how our family traditions have grown and shaped over the years to proclaim a very personal "He is risen! He is risen, indeed!"

In 2009, our daughter-in-law's beloved father died of cancer just before Ash Wednesday, so the Lenten journey reminded all of us of a very personal stake in the resurrection. Our daughter-in-law hosted an early Easter dinner for her family that year. It had always been at her parents' home; this was the year for a new tradition. They lit a candle on each table to remember this amazing man.

Our family's Easter Sunday tradition has been to worship together, to celebrate the resurrection in the return of the alleluias, and to go directly to the cemetery, just minutes away, where my parents are buried. There, we gather each year to tell two generations of our family the stories of the grandparents and great-grandparents they will not know in this life, whose lives and stories have shaped all of us.

Yes, we do share an Easter dinner, so later in the afternoon, our family reassembled after naps to have dinner. There was an Easter egg hunt in the yard for our grandchildren, followed by opening Easter baskets. These baskets had only a small curtsy to candy, and a number of items to help tell the story that changed all of human history. One was an alphabet book, based on Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. One was a foam carton of "Resurrection Eggs," each one holding a symbol of Holy Week, to help the children learn the story and be looking for the symbols that tell the story. Each child received an Easter Cube, which opens to tell the story in pictures and just a few words. This is a grandmother who is always thinking about providing "faith groceries."

That year, we were all awaiting the birth of a new baby, who needed to hear the stories of Jesus, of faith, and of family. An older brother and sister were being prepared to know the stories and to share them.

This year, we are awaiting the birth of another baby, who needs to know these stories. She has three cousins who will share them and follow Jesus' command to "Go, make disciples."

How will you do that this season?

#### FAMILY ACTIVITIES

1. Plan ahead. For whom will you light a candle, in memory and appreciation, this Easter?
2. If graves aren't close by, frame pictures or put out memorabilia of those you have loved. Set aside some time on Easter to tell those stories.
3. In prayer today, thank God for those who have shaped you, who are now with God.
4. If you are filling Easter baskets for those you love, what could you place in the basket that helps them know and tell the story of Jesus' death and resurrection?
5. Tell your children (or grandchildren) your treasured Easter memories. What a wonderful way to link the generations, to help them know you, to pass on the things that stirred faith in you.